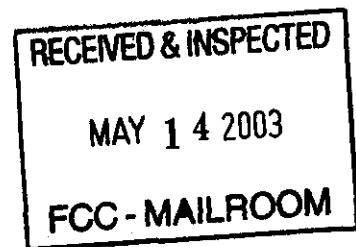


02-277

7 May 2003

**Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554**



Dear Commissioner Abernathy:

As a retired newspaper editor, I am deeply concerned about the direction today's media outlets are taking in failing to report news objectively. My primary sources of news are NBC Nightly News, CNN, MSNBC and a wide range of America's newspapers online.

Network news has had a longstanding record of trustworthy reporting and investigative fervor. Those of its viewers who wish to be informed of all sides of an issue, who rely on intellect rather than emotions to guide them to the truth still look to its news organizations for fair reporting.

More and more I have seen cable and network news anchors interject biased comments and report "speculation" rather than established facts, and even more alarming air only one-sided coverage of a story.

This unsettling trend is the result of major media corporations turning responsible journalism into "entertainment."

I was particularly discouraged when MSNBC added Michael Savage to its lineup. Yes, in an effort to "out-fox Fox." Now, with NBC's reprimand of Ashleigh Banfield for her recent comments to the Kansas State University audience, I am left with the desperate belief that Americans are no longer free to voice their convictions and journalists no longer have autonomy in reporting a story as they witness it.

I have read the transcript of Ms. Banfield's speech and, taken in its entirety, it is my opinion that she spoke the truth about coverage of the war in Iraq and the necessity to cover its aftermath. And, isn't truth the first line of defense in journalism? I have read a comment attributed to "an NBC news insider" stating that Ms. Banfield does not "set the standard of journalism." Today's TV news coverage begs the question: Confirmed what is the current standard of journalism?

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There is a question as to the effect the upcoming FCC decision (2 June 2003) is having on what big media is reporting and how the stories are handled. I certainly am aware that big media is interested in profits, but am troubled that there is a conflict of interest, that political stories may be biased in order to woo a public administration into relaxing restrictions on media ownership that would result in increased profits.

The overriding question about the FCC's upcoming decision is whether the Commission remembers it is there to serve the public rather than the interest of major media corporations. The same question is appropriate for the media outlets themselves: are they there to serve the public and its right to know or only to increase profits?

If the latter is true, then responsible journalism in this country is a noble idea of the past, and an Orwellian mist has fallen over the mindset of Americans.

Best wishes in your endeavors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "B.J. Trotter".

**Ms. B.J. Trotter
111-B Heritage Drive
Anderson, SC 29621
Telephone: 864-226-8975
Email: greygardens@msn.com**

7 May 2003

**Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554**

Confirmed

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7 May 2003

**Commissioner Michael J. Copps
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554**

Confirmed

MAY 16 2003

RECEIVED & INSPECTED

MAY 14 2003

FCC - MAILROOM

Distribution Center

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7 May 2003

**Commissioner Kevin J. Martin
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
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